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SAID & HEARD

BISMARCK, ND – Water contamination and flooding issues.

Dave Glatt, Environmental Health Section Chief

"As long as we have frozen ground and melting snow, the water is going to continue to rise in the camps. They will have to double their efforts to remove the waste in a timely manner. If it continues to melt, they won't be able to move much out otherwise –unless we get a freeze in the near future."

"The only thing we can do from a department standpoint is to monitor downstream for contaminants. Unfortunately, ice will impede water quality observation efforts."

Kirby Kruger, Director of Disease Control

"Like any other exposure to untreated water, exposure to or ingestion of flood waters can result in infections or illness."

"Flood waters contaminated with untreated sewage or animal waste can contain disease causing organisms and exposure to these waters can result in illness."

Tim Wiedrich, Emergency Preparedness and Response Section Chief

"Spring flooding in North Dakota water is very dangerous. In this cold climate, walking or standing in even shallow water for a short period is life threatening because of hypothermia."

"It would be dangerous and potentially life threatening for EMS or other rescuers to respond to a medical emergency in a flooded camp. It is hard to understand why anyone would endanger themselves and rescuers by ignoring warnings and staying in a dangerous flood prone area."

"It would be tragic if a protester, EMS provider, or any other rescuer lost their life because protesters ignored flood warnings about the camps."

Sources: Dave Glatt, Environmental Health Section Chief; Kirby Kruger, Director of Disease Control; Tim Wiedrich, Emergency Preparedness and Response Section Chief